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Housekeepers' Chat

Monday, September 22, 1930.

U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Subject: "Receipts for the Pickle-Maker." Recipes from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Fermented Pickles."

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"I swear," began Uncle Ebenezer, looking hastily through his pockets.

"Why do you swear?" I asked.

"I swear," said Uncle Ebenezer, still rummaging through his pockets, "that I don't know what I did with it!"

"With what?" I asked.

"With my notebook. Somebody asked me if some day I'd ask you something about something or other, and now I can't remember-- Here it is!"

From the depth of his inside coat pocket, Uncle Ebenezer pulled forth a shabby notebook -- the same shabby notebook that he has carried all 'round the world.

"Cucumber and Onion Pickles," said Uncle Ebenezer. "Now I remember! You know the lady who lives in the brand new house, with the iron dog in the front yard? Well, she stopped me one day last week, and asked me if you had a recipe for Cucumber and Onion Pickles. Have you?"

"Yes, of course. Is that all she wanted?"

"No. She said she had heard of a confection made of watermelon pickle covered with chocolate. Is there such a thing?"

"Of course there is. You've eaten it yourself, at Christmas time."

"Is that a fact!" exclaimed Uncle Ebenezer. "I told the lady I'd ask, but I figured she was wrong. Here's her name and address, and much credit is due me for remembering to tell you."

"How did it happen," I asked, "that you remembered?"

Uncle Ebenezer blushed. "It was the iron dog," he explained. "Tonight I came home late. My thoughts were on my work. As you know, I am a trifle absent-minded, at times. When I passed the house on the corner -- you know the way the street light shines on that iron dog? It looks positively real! I thought -- Why are you laughing, Aunt Sammy?"



"I'm not laughing. I'm just smiling. I recollect now that you came in tonight -- in somewhat of a hurry."

Uncle Ebenezer replaced his precious notebook, and sighed a sigh of relief.

"Send her the recipes," he said. "Send them, or broadcast them, but please don't ask me to deliver them in person."

Out of respect for Uncle Ebenezer, and because I want you to have these recipes, I shall broadcast them this morning. First, the recipe for "Cucumber and Onion Rings." For those who like onions and want a homemade pickle that can be started one day and sealed for storing the next, here is just the recipe. This pickle stays surprisingly crisp, too, for several months. Seven ingredients, for "Cucumber and Onion Rings."

1 peck of small cucumbers,
2 quarts of small white onions,
1 cupful of salt,
1 cupful of mustard seed,
2 tablespoons of celery seed,
2 tablespoons of peppercorns, and
Vinegar.

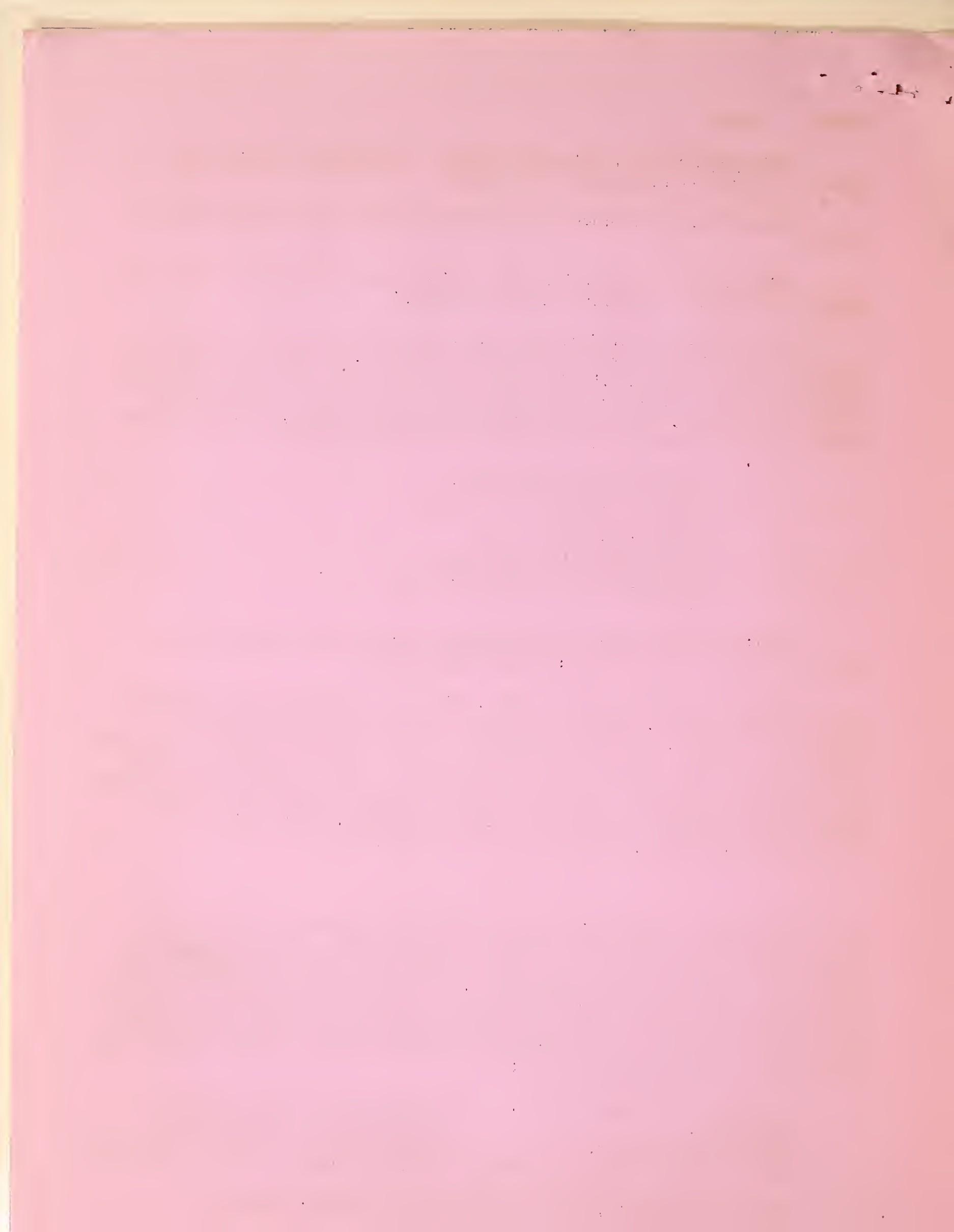
Let's check this list of ingredients, and see that everybody has seven -- no more, and no less: (Repeat ingredients).

Now we're ready to get to work. Slice the onions and the cucumbers, about 1/4 inch thick. Pack in a crock, in layers, with salt sprinkled between the layers. Let stand overnight. In the morning, drain in a cheesecloth bag, and press out all the juice possible. Taste the pickle, before adding the vinegar. If the pickle is too salty, rinse in cold water. Measure the onions and cucumbers. Take half as much vinegar, heat to the boiling point, add the spices, and pour over the vegetables. Pack at once, in sterilized glass jars, seal, and store in a cool place.

I'm going to give you one more recipe this morning, a recipe for Watermelon Pickle. Watermelon Pickle is easy to make. Watermelon Pickle, clear, spicy, amber-colored, and crisp. Do you know what makes this pickle crisp? An overnight bath in limewater. The limewater is made with calcium hydroxide, bought and accurately weighed at the drugstore, and mixed with an exact quantity of water. There are eight ingredients for Watermelon Pickle. Turn over a new leaf -- in your radio notebooks, and let's write, slowly, the ingredients for Watermelon Pickle:

4 pounds of watermelon rind,	2 tablespoons of whole allspice,
Limewater,	2 tablespoons of whole cloves,
2 quarts of vinegar,	10 small pieces of stick cinnamon, and
4-1/2 pounds of granulated sugar,	1 pint of water.

Eight ingredients, again, for Watermelon Pickle: (Repeat).



Now, before we begin on the recipe, let me tell you how to make the limewater. For the limewater, use 2 quarts of cold water and 10 grams, or 2 tablespoons, of lime. I'll repeat it: For the limewater, use 2 quarts of cold water and 10 grams, or 2 tablespoons of lime, (calcium hydroxide).

Now, on with the recipe. Select rind from a firm, not over-ripe melon. Before weighing the rind, trim off the green skin and the pink flesh. Then weigh, cut in inch cubes, and soak for 2-1/2 hours in the limewater. Then drain, cover with fresh water, and cook for 1-1/2 hours, or until tender. Add more water as it boils off. Let the rind stand overnight in this same water, and next morning, drain. Bring to the boiling point the vinegar, one pint of water, sugar, and spices tied loosely in cheesecloth. Add the drained watermelon. Boil gently for two hours, or until the syrup is fairly thick. Remove the spice bag, pack the watermelon pickle in sterilized glass jars, seal air-tight, and store in a cool place.

Have you ever eaten watermelon pickle, covered with chocolate? "No," says Mrs. Dubious, "and besides, I can't imagine such a queer combination."

All right, Mrs Dubious. But just try it some time. Lift some of your watermelon pickle from the syrup, leave it in the air until dry, and then dip the pickle in melted chocolate. You'll be surprised. It's really a delectable confection.

Tomorrow: "Questions and Answers."

